

**Town of West Hartford
Conservation and Environment Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2015, 7:00 PM
Town Hall, Room 314**

Present: Brian McCarthy (Chair), Beth Lander-Morris, Matt Macunas, Stephanie Wnuck

Commission called to order at 7:08 P.M.

1. The September 2015 CEC Meeting Minutes were approved (on Motion by Macunas, Second by Wnuck).
2. Communications and News:
 - The Town Council has appointed Katie Reilly of West Hartford to the commission.
3. Old Business: none
4. New Business:

New Business

Application (IWW #1040) of the Center Development Corporation (Contract Purchaser/Developer) (Susan A. Hays, Attorney) requesting approval of a map amendment to the Official Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Map of the Town of West Hartford for property located at 27 Park Road and 14 Ringgold Street. The proposed amendment is based on an on-site soil survey prepared by a professional soil scientist. (Submitted for IWWA receipt on November 5, 2015. Suggest required public hearing be scheduled for December 7, 2015.)

Application (IWW #1041) of the Center Development Corporation (Contract Purchaser/Developer) (Susan A. Hays, Attorney), requesting approval of an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Permit to conduct certain regulated activities which may have an adverse impact on a wetland and watercourse area. The applicant is proposing to redevelop and reuse the existing primary building and construct a new residential building containing 310 apartments units and 36 residential living units along with the associated site grading, drainage and landscape improvements at property located at 27 Park Road and 14 Ringgold Street. (Submitted for IWWA receipt on November 5, 2015. Presented for determination of significance.)

Susan Hays of Updike, Kelly & Spellacy; Andy Krar of Design Professionals; Henry Thomas (landscape architect); and John Ianni (soil scientist); presented two applications, IWW #1040 and IWW #1041. These applications pertain to a wetland map amendment and the redevelopment and new construction on the Sisters of St. Joseph Chambery property at 27 Park Road, along with significant proposed site work to

accommodate the new development. The construction on the site is anticipated to begin in spring of 2016.

Center Development Corporation proposes a wetlands map amendment based on a recent wetlands delineation at the property. The site is approximately 20 acres, with a building footprint of approximately 5 acres. An existing cemetery located west of the un-named stream that runs through the property will remain although a small house also on the property will be demolished.

The designated wetland area is in the southern area of the property, characterized as a very flat, typical flood plain. It is composed of fine grained silts and clays, and contains a perennial watercourse running about 18 inches deep. The bound of the 150 foot review area is within the building footprint.

The developer proposes new construction of a two story parking garage with four stories for residential units atop it, measuring 84 feet above ground. The current building footprint covers approximately 50,000 square feet, and an additional 57,000 square feet is proposed, mostly consisting of a parking garage on the south side that goes over the existing parking lot. The developer proposes to expand the building footprint primarily along the side facing Prospect Street, and east-west along the southern parking area. The building is currently 140,000 square feet when including all floors, and 40,000 square feet of parking surface. The proposal will add 292,000 square feet of building space and 115,000 square feet of garage space, totaling to 547,000 square feet of surface.

The Commission sought assurance the project would decrease peak runoff on site; sought clarified plan documents that combined existing structure and proposed structure on one sheet with delineations included; and inquired as to the increased runoff from expanding the building footprint. The commission had concern with the building and or proposed southernmost parking area being expanded into the southern yard area which clearly serves as a flood plain feature.

The site currently has no well-defined, unitary storm water discharge system or water treatment system. Storm water disperses at various sites to the southern brook. Park Road drainage moves westerly to the brook. Drainage on the southern and eastern side flows directly to the brook. Existing MDC-owned sanitary sewers run lateral under what will be the new construction on the southern side, then flow north. Visual inspection reveals a monitoring well (2' stick-up) near the southern bound of the flood plain.

The town engineer reported existing downstream flooding issues to the developer, with possible upstream flooding issues at Prospect and Boulevard. Thus the developer reports that increasing flood storage capacity at the development site will help minimize downstream flooding. The site will maintain the existing grade at the peak of the southern slope (around 51') which is also the elevation of the finished floor of the proposed garage; plantings will consist of a mixture of seeded perennials and grasses, and planted perennials. The bottom of the slope (around 44') will be planted with pastoral grasses.

The proposed additional flood storage would further flatten the flood plain area between the alluvial and wet soils. Developer plans to remove one foot of wetlands soil, gaining an additional 604 cubic yards of flood storage representing 12,000 gallons. Removed soil would be used elsewhere onsite. This change would not reveal surface water. An existing pitch at the southern edge of this flood plain toward the perennial watercourse will remain. The commission does not wholly agree that this additional flood storage feature and excavation is a necessary action that should be taken in a defined wetland.

In addition, a detention basin with 1000 square feet of surface area will be excavated to a depth of four feet, designed to hold back peak discharge events. Site roof runoff will be fed through underground pipes, to a hydrodynamic separator. Parking lot runoff would sheet flow directly to the detention basin. The developer is designing a stone trench with pipe to diffuse water flow velocity en route to the basin. A 17" orifice at the bottom of structure would allow water to escape, leading through 24" pipe to a riprap plunge pool. There is one open grated emergency overflow structure slightly northwest of the structure, at the 100-year-storm height. Level spreaders of large stone will be installed throughout the property. The commission sees this proposed feature as a beneficial item although its location may need to be shifted to the north if encroachment of the southern parking lot (proposed) into the flood plain is evident. The new drawings the applicant was requested by the CEC to develop that would clearly define existing and proposed features, should help the CEC determine if the detention basin is in an appropriate area that does not encroach upon the existing flood plain on the site.

The developer proposes a maintenance plan of biannual inspections; rearrangement of riprap at level spreaders; cleaning the hydrodynamic separator; and conducting visual inspection of catch basins.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm (on Motion by Wnuck, Second by Landers-Morris)